

Lesson 31: David, the Shepherd King

“It was the best of times, it was the worst of times,” So begins Charles Dickens’ *The Tale of Two Cities*. That’s the way I felt as a young man when I moved to Vermont to live in a Christian commune and preach the gospel. We didn’t have much money, and there were times when we were thankful for a peanut butter sandwich. But I made many good friends, saw God’s provision time and time again and knew that God was in control. We were naïve and did some stupid things as well, but God, knowing our hearts was always faithful and took care of us. I remember one time when 2 of my roommates from college drove cross country and visited me in our commune. It was a time when we were really short on money and barely had enough food to eat or money to pay the bills. My two friends, Gary and Rob stayed a couple of days, and then we said good-bye and they left to continue their trip back to California. However, about an hour later, there’s a knock on our front door, and it’s Gary standing there and he says the Lord told him to turn the car around and head back to our place and give us \$100. which was a big deal in 1973, probably more like \$500 today. Over and over, we saw God’s hand of provision and protection and experienced God’s grace and care through many generous and supportive friends like Gary and Rob.

I think David would say the same thing of his early years, before he came to power as Israel’s king. He had some difficult times. He was the youngest son, and it seemed as though he got all the dirty work. His brothers did not look up to him, but treated him with a measure of disrespect (1 Samuel 17:28). He wasn’t even present for selection as Israel’s king (1 Samuel 16:10-11). After he was anointed as Israel’s next king and had defeated Goliath, he had to flee from Saul, who sought to perpetuate his reign by killing his replacement.

These were difficult days for David, but they were also the “best of times.” David learned to deal with danger, and he also learned to fight (see 1 Samuel 16:18). He came to rely upon God and to love His Word. He learned obedience and submission, even when his life was in danger. He developed close, enduring friendships and alliances.

I also want to take a time-out to let you know that some of the material for today’s lesson comes **The Bible for Dummies** by Jeffrey Geoghegan, professor of Biblical Theology at Boston College, and Dr. Michael Homan, Professor of Biblical studies at Xavier University of Louisiana, and published by Wiley Publishing, Inc.

Their book, “**The Bible for Dummies**” is an excellent resource to give you a better understanding of the Bible. They explain everything in plain English along with some great illustrations and of course, their dose of humor and wit. So if you want to get a better overall understanding of the Bible as you are going through this Firm Foundation series, go to Amazon or Barnes and Noble and order this outstanding resource: **The Bible for Dummies**.

In today’s lesson, we will learn about David as the Shepherd King. But first, let’s review last week’s **Lesson 30: The Rise of David, the Shepherd Boy**

Questions for Review:

1. Samuel goes to Jesse's house in Bethlehem to look for the next king and what is the message that God gives to Samuel as he is looking at Jesse's sons? *God said to Samuel, "Do not look at his countenance and at his tall stature, for I have rejected him. For it is not as man perceives it; a man sees what is visible to the eyes but God sees into the heart."* (1 Samuel 16:7)
2. How was David armed when he faced Goliath? *He only had his shepherd's staff and a slingshot, and five smooth stones.*
3. Whose name did David say had authorized him to fight Goliath and win? **1 Samuel 17:45 (ESV)** *I come to you in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied.*
4. After David kills Goliath, what event causes King Saul to become jealous of David? *The Israelite women go around the streets singing, "Saul has slain his thousands and David his ten thousands."*
5. When David comes upon Saul in the cave, what does he do? *He cuts off the edge of Saul's robe while he is asleep.*
6. Why doesn't David follow the advice of his men and kill King Saul who is asleep in the cave? *Because David knows that King Saul is still God's anointed king and he refuses to touch God's anointed.*
7. How does Nabal treat David and his men after they have offered protection for him, his household and his sheep? *He treats David and his men with contempt, mocking David and his men as outlaws.*
8. Who intervenes on Nabal's behalf? *His wife Abigail who intercedes on behalf of her husband whom she says is a fool.*
9. What happens to Nabal? *He suffers a stroke, is paralyzed and dies ten days later.*
10. What becomes of Nabal's wife, Abigail? *She marries David.*
11. Samuel is the last _____ of Israel? **Judge**
12. When Samuel dies, how does Saul try to communicate with him? *By consulting the witch at Endor.*
13. What message does Samuel give to Saul, from beyond the grave? *The next day, Saul and his sons will be killed by the Philistines.*

A. Introduction: The Coming Deliverer (Messiah) will be the Son of David

Theme: God is loving, merciful, and gracious.

Today, we're going to learn about David as King of Israel. Now, here's an amazing thing. It was prophesied by the prophet Micah that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem.

Even when the wise men from the east visited Herod, they referenced this prophesy:

Matthew 2:1-6 (ESV)

¹ Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem,

² saying, "Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him."

³ When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him;

⁴ and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born.

⁵ They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet:

⁶ “‘And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.’”

The wise men were looking for the Deliverer, the Messiah, who would be the King of the Jews as well as a shepherd of his people, Israel. And in Matthew 1:1, Jesus, the Messiah, is referred to as the “Son of David.” 17 times in the New Testament, Jesus is referred to as the “son of David.” But the question arises, how could Jesus be the son of David if David lived approximately 1,000 years before Jesus? The answer is that Yeshua, Jesus (the Messiah) was the fulfillment of the prophecy of the seed of David ([2 Samuel 7:14–16](#)).

Jesus is the promised Messiah, which means He had to be of the lineage of David. We’ll examine this further in future lessons, but for now, I want you to see that even as David was a shepherd and a King, so also, the Messiah would be from King David’s family line and would also be a shepherd and a king, which is why he would be called, the “Son of David.”

Let’s look at the chronological timeline. You’ll notice the 3 major kings, starting with King Saul, then King David, and finally David’s son, Solomon. I placed a red arrow pointing to David and notice the approximate time when all this is going on is at about 1000 BC. That’s a little over 3000 yrs ago.

B. Oh, How the Mighty Have Fallen

David finds out about Saul’s and Jonathan’s death and makes this famous lament, “Oh, how the mighty have fallen!” (2 Sam. 1:25). And of Jonathan in particular, David says, “I grieve for you, my brother Jonathan. You were precious to me. Your love was exceedingly wonderful to me, surpassing the love of women” (2 Samuel 1:26)—so close was their bond of friendship.

But now, things get pretty messy as David sets out to secure his throne.

C. David Secures His Throne

Theme: Man must have faith in order to please God and be saved.

Now that Saul is dead, David will quickly – and almost automatically – become Israel’s king. This is not the case at all. It will be more than seven years after Saul’s death that David becomes king of all Israel. David sought God’s guidance and returned to Hebron, where he was anointed king over Judah ([2 Samuel 2:1-4](#)). David’s first kingly act was to reward the people of Jabesh Gilead for courageously removing Saul’s body from public display and giving him a proper burial (2:5-7).

Although Saul is dead, David does not immediately become king over Israel because the northern tribes make Saul’s son, Ishbaal (sometimes called Ishbosheth), their king. Eventually, though, Ishbaal’s general, Abner, realizes that David is the better man and offers to bring Ishbaal’s forces to David. David’s general, Joab, however, feels Abner is too dangerous to be trusted and kills him in treachery.

Not long after this, Ishbaal also meets his end when two soldiers sneak into his room while he's asleep and cut off his head. As in the case of Saul's death, when the men report to David what they have done, rather than reward them, David has them killed for their treachery. Yet, because of their treachery, David is now the undisputed king of Israel.

D. David's Political Saavy

David's first strategic move as king of both Judah and the northern tribes of Israel is to move his capital from Hebron, which is in Judah, to Jerusalem, a city previously not belonging to either Judah or the northern tribes and which was on the border between the north and the south. Thus, David's choice of Jerusalem as capital is somewhat analogous to the choice of Washington D.C. as the capital of the United States.

In both cases, the capital is on the border of the north and south, and did not belong to any one tribe or state. David also solves a religious dilemma. Two groups of priests wanted the esteemed position of Israel's High Priest. One group, whose leader was Abiathar, seems to have traced its lineage back to Moses. The other group, whose leader was Zadok, traced its lineage to Aaron. David solves this problem by appointing both priests as High Priest.

David's culminating strategic move is to transfer the sacred Ark of the Covenant and Tabernacle from Kiriath-Jearim to Jerusalem. However this is tricky and David runs into some problems.

E. Transferring the Ark

Theme: Man can come to God only according to God's will and plan.

2 Samuel 6:1-11 (ESV)

¹ David again gathered all the chosen men of Israel, thirty thousand.

² And David arose and went with all the people who were with him from Baale-judah to bring up from there the ark of God, which is called by the name of the LORD of hosts who sits enthroned on the cherubim.

³ And they carried the ark of God on a new cart and brought it out of the house of Abinadab, which was on the hill. And Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab, were driving the new cart,

⁴ with the ark of God, and Ahio went before the ark.

⁵ And David and all the house of Israel were celebrating before the LORD, with songs and lyres and harps and tambourines and castanets and cymbals.

⁶ And when they came to the threshing floor of Nacon, Uzzah put out his hand to the ark of God and took hold of it, for the oxen stumbled.

⁷ And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Uzzah, and God struck him down there because of his error, and he died there beside the ark of God.

⁸ And David was angry because the LORD had broken out against Uzzah. And that place is called Perez-uzzah to this day.

⁹ And David was afraid of the LORD that day, and he said, "How can the ark of the LORD come to me?"

¹⁰ So David was not willing to take the ark of the LORD into the city of David. But David took it aside to the house of Obed-edom the Gittite.

¹¹ And the ark of the LORD remained in the house of Obed-edom the Gittite three months, and the LORD blessed Obed-edom and all his household.

The procession accompanying the transfer of the Ark to Jerusalem is filled with music, shouting, horns, song and dance. But tragedy strikes suddenly when the ark begins to totter on the cart carrying it and a man named Uzzah reaches out his hand to steady it. For his concern, he is struck dead by God. This puzzling event enrages David, but the message is clear: “Don’t mess with the ark because it is HOLY.”

The other important thing to note is that David was not transporting the ark in the prescribed manner. What's the right way? The Levites were the ones who were suppose to carry the ark, the poles were to be put through the little ringlets at the bottom of the ark, the poles were to be placed on the shoulders of these specially chosen men, and they were to balance it as they carried it from one place to another. And David didn't do that. He took a convenient route and changed the details to fit the expediency of the hour.

Notice the difference depicted in these pictures. David was moving the ark on a cart which became unsteady and Uzzah reached out to stead it and he was struck dead by God. Whereas, the method which God gave them to transport the ark was with the use of 2 poles which meant the ark would not become unsteady because it was carried by four men.

When David witnesses the death of Uzziah for trying to save the ark from falling over, he gets mad at God and says he’s not going to bring it into Jerusalem. Instead he drops the ark off at the house of Obed-edom the Gittite. And we are told that the ark of the LORD remained in the house of Obed-edom the Gittite three months, and the LORD blessed Obed-edom and all his household.

Finally, David wises up and realizes that the fault was his for not following God’s instructions in the proper transport of the ark. So 3 months later, he continues the parade with the Ark and dances before the Ark with all his might. When the parade finally enters the city of Jerusalem, the Ark is taken to the Tabernacle and a feast is held.

That evening, when David returns home, Michal, David’s wife, is not in a partying mood: “How the king of Israel has distinguished himself today before the eyes of his virgin maids as a vulgar man would shamelessly uncover himself?” Apparently, David’s dancing in only a night shirt revealed more than Michael wanted him to reveal. David, who feels innocent in the matter, rebukes Michal for her questioning his character. The story concludes, “And Michal, the daughter of Saul, had no child until the day of her death” (2 Samuel 6:23). That is to say, because she is so concerned about David exposing himself, he will never do so again in her presence.

F. Building Houses for God and David

Theme: God communicates with man.

Theme: God is faithful; He never changes. He always keeps his promises.

David, now resides in a beautiful palace, but decides that he wants to upgrade God’s house from a mobile home (The Tabernacle) to a state-of-the-art estate (The Temple). As it turns out, though, God prefers the Tabernacle, and, furthermore, David’s hands are too bloody from all his wars to build such a sacred building. However, God appreciates David’s intentions, and, in a play on words, God tells David that although he won’t build God a house, God will build him a “house” in the form of a dynasty. God even promises David that his dynasty “will endure forever”—a promise referred to as the Davidic

Covenant. God is foretelling David of the coming Deliverer-Messiah who will come from his family line and will be a shepherd-king.

Note that God’s promise to David that his dynasty would last forever is cut short when, in 586 B.C. The Babylonians destroy Jerusalem. As a result, later prophets understood God’s promise to mean that He would again raise up a descendant of David to rule over Israel, only this new king would usher in a kingdom that, as God promised, would never end. This belief became known as the **Messianic Expectation**, from the Hebrew word, *meshiach*, which means “*anointed one*.”

G. David and Bathsheba

Theme: God is everywhere all the time; He knows everything.

The story of David and Bathsheba begins with a notice intended to prepare the reader for trouble. “It was spring, when kings go out to war’ (2 Samuel 11:1). David, however, stays home, sending his general Joab in his place. Spring is also the time when birds and bees are in full swing, and trouble is on the horizon—the kind of trouble that arises from greed, lust and arrogance.

Late one afternoon, David strolls along the palace roof and spies a beautiful woman bathing. This is not an ordinary bath, but a ritual bath a woman takes after menstruation. This is vital information in the story, because she is clearly not pregnant at this point. David asks his assistant who the woman is, and he is informed that her name is Bathsheba (Hebrew for daughter). She is the wife of a man named Uriah, one of David’s trusted soldiers now out in the field.

David summons Bathsheba to his chamber, and one thing leads to another, and he breaks two of the Ten Commandments. David covets his neighbor’s wife and commits adultery. David soon adds a third violation to the list.

Shortly thereafter, Bathsheba sends a message to David: “I am with child.” David quickly devises a plan, and truth be told, it’s a clever one.

David summons Uriah home from the battlefield. After asking him about the war, David instructs Uriah to go home and “wash your feet” which is a euphemism for sexual intercourse. Instead, Uriah sleeps at the door of the palace and does not go home. When questioned about this the next day, Uriah tells David that he won’t go home and enjoy himself while Israel and the Ark remain on the battlefield. (Finally, we meet a righteous person in the Bible and he’s ruining everything!) Actually, Uriah’s statement is an unintended rebuke, because David is at home and not fighting. Moreover, he’s not just enjoying himself while others are out fighting for his kingdom, he’s enjoying himself with the wife of one of those fighting for his kingdom.

Rather than give up on his plan, David gets Uriah drunk, thinking the alcohol will loosen him up a little and will result with Uriah going home to sleep with his wife. But still, Uriah will not go home.

This story is filled with irony, because Uriah, a Hittite (non-Israelite), knows God’s rules better than David. Soldiers fighting for God need to be ritually pure, and this specifically means no sexual relations.

Because Uriah won't go along with David's plan, David writes a letter instructing Joab to place Uriah on the front lines, then have the other troops withdraw, exposing Uriah to the enemy. When Uriah arrives back at the front, he gives Joab the letter, who does as it instructs.

When Bathsheba finds out that her husband is dead, she mourns for the requisite time and then marries David. Their child, a son, is eventually born, and David, it seems, has gotten away with murder and adultery.

But not so fast...David's trusted prophet confronts David.

H. Nathan confronts David: "You da' man!"

Theme: God is everywhere all the time; He knows everything.

Theme: God is holy and righteous. He demands death as the payment for sin.

David's trusted prophet, Nathan, comes to him to inform him of a tremendous injustice that has taken place in his kingdom.

2 Samuel 12:1-15 (ESV)

¹ And the LORD sent Nathan to David. He came to him and said to him, "There were two men in a certain city, the one rich and the other poor.

² The rich man had very many flocks and herds,

³ but the poor man had nothing but one little ewe lamb, which he had bought. And he brought it up, and it grew up with him and with his children. It used to eat of his morsel and drink from his cup and lie in his arms, and it was like a daughter to him.

⁴ Now there came a traveler to the rich man, and he was unwilling to take one of his own flock or herd to prepare for the guest who had come to him, but he took the poor man's lamb and prepared it for the man who had come to him."

⁵ Then David's anger was greatly kindled against the man, and he said to Nathan, "As the LORD lives, the man who has done this deserves to die,

⁶ and he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity."

⁷ Nathan said to David, "You are the man! Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, 'I anointed you king over Israel, and I delivered you out of the hand of Saul.

⁸ And I gave you your master's house and your master's wives into your arms and gave you the house of Israel and of Judah. And if this were too little, I would add to you as much more.

⁹ Why have you despised the word of the LORD, to do what is evil in his sight? You have struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword and have taken his wife to be your wife and have killed him with the sword of the Ammonites.

¹⁰ Now therefore the sword shall never depart from your house, because you have despised me and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife.'

¹¹ Thus says the LORD, 'Behold, I will raise up evil against you out of your own house. And I will take your wives before your eyes and give them to your neighbor, and he shall lie with your wives in the sight of this sun.

¹² For you did it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel and before the sun.'"

¹³ David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the LORD." And Nathan said to David, "The LORD also has put away your sin; you shall not die.

¹⁴ Nevertheless, because by this deed you have utterly scorned the LORD, the child who is born to you shall die."

¹⁵ Then Nathan went to his house. And the LORD afflicted the child that Uriah's wife bore to David, and he became sick.

Nathan looks David straight in the eye and says, "You're the man!" David unknowingly condemned himself because he's the parable's rich man. David had many wives, but took Uriah's only wife.

David stands in shock as Nathan continues to deliver God's message. David's dynasty will continue, but he will receive a threefold punishment:

1. The sword will never leave David's house, meaning that David's family will be undone by violence.
2. Someone will take David's wives and sleep with them in public, because David took his neighbor's wife in secret.
3. The child of David & Bathsheba from their adulterous affair, will die.

The third punishment comes true first, though Bathsheba and David will have another son, Solomon. The next two punishments come to fruition shortly afterwards, as David's family gradually falls apart.

I. Fighting For David's Throne

Similar to making sausage, the politics of an ancient monarchy are more appealing when you are unaware of what's on the inside. The Bible gives us a rare glimpse into the inner workings of a royal family, and it's not pretty.

J. The Rape of Tamar

David's oldest son, Amnon, is the crown prince, but he will not live long enough to reach the throne. His trouble begins with his infatuation for his beautiful half-sister, Tamar, which makes him "sick" with love. Amnon's cousin, Jonadab, who is described as very wise, gives some very unwise advice. He instructs Amnon to feign illness and then ask his father to allow Tamar to nurse him back to health. When they are alone together, Jonadab schemes, Amnon is to sleep with her (or you might say, 'rape' her). Amnon foolishly does as Jonadab instructs. However, when David learns of Amnon's actions, he does nothing, leaving the punishment to another, Tamar's full-brother, Absalom.

Two years later, Absalom decides to throw a party, only this is no ordinary celebration, but rather, a sheep-shearing festival! Think about this for a minute: abundant alcohol, hundreds of rowdy young men with shears, and thousands of sheep. These parties were so out-of-control that they made a fraternity party seem tame. Amnon gets drunk, and not ordinary drunk, but sheep-shearing-festival drunk. Then, according to plan, Absalom's men jump Amnon and kill him. Fearing reprisal from his father, Absalom flees Israel. However, eventually David and Absalom are reconciled, and Absalom returns to Jerusalem.

K. Rebellious Children and Parents in Denial

Theme: God is faithful; He never changes. He always keeps his promises.

Theme: God is holy and righteous. He demands death as the payment for sin.

Absalom doesn't waste time in Jerusalem waiting for David to die so he can become king. He rises early every morning and stands at the city gate, the center of action for a biblical city. When people pass by on their way for a judgment from King David. Absalom promises them that if he were king, they would

receive a more favorable decision. Eventually, Absalom steals the hearts of the Israelites from David with these tactics and his good looks.

In fact, along with Samson, Absalom has some pretty famous biblical hair. It is described as both beautiful and abundant, so much so, in fact, that when they cut it annually, it weight 5 lbs. Just as hair proved vital in the downfall of Samson, Absalom's beautiful locks prove to be his undoing.

After winning the hearts of the majority of Israel, Absalom declares himself king, and David is forced to flee Jerusalem. As one of the first "acts of state," Absalom sets a tent up on the palace roof in Jerusalem (the same spot from which David first saw Bathsheba) and sleeps with David's many wives in broad daylight. This actions fulfills Nathan's prophecy that because David took another man's wife in secret, someone would take his in public.

Eventually, though, David's forces defeat Absalom's, and Absalom is forced to flee from battle. However, while Absalom is escaping by mule, his long hair gets tangled in a tree, and he is left hanging there. When Joab finds Absalom, he orders him killed, even though David gave strict orders that no harm should come to his son.

When David hears of Absalom's death, he is very upset, and famously mourns, "O my son, Absalom, my son, my son! Would I have died instead of you, O Absalom, my son, my son!" (2 Samuel 18:33)

L. David's Last Days

Near the end of 2 Samuel, we are treated to a beautiful song composed by David, a song that echoes many of the psalms ascribed to David.

2 Samuel 22:1-51 (ESV)

¹ And David spoke to the LORD the words of this song on the day when the LORD delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul.

² He said, "The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer,

³ my God, my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold and my refuge, my savior; you save me from violence.

⁴ I call upon the LORD, who is worthy to be praised, and I am saved from my enemies.

⁵ "For the waves of death encompassed me, the torrents of destruction assailed me;

⁶ the cords of Sheol entangled me; the snares of death confronted me.

⁷ "In my distress I called upon the LORD; to my God I called. From his temple he heard my voice, and my cry came to his ears.

⁸ "Then the earth reeled and rocked; the foundations of the heavens trembled and quaked, because he was angry.

⁹ Smoke went up from his nostrils, and devouring fire from his mouth; glowing coals flamed forth from him.

¹⁰ He bowed the heavens and came down; thick darkness was under his feet.

¹¹ He rode on a cherub and flew; he was seen on the wings of the wind.

¹² He made darkness around him his canopy, thick clouds, a gathering of water.

¹³ Out of the brightness before him coals of fire flamed forth.

¹⁴ The LORD thundered from heaven, and the Most High uttered his voice.

¹⁵ And he sent out arrows and scattered them; lightning, and routed them.

¹⁶ Then the channels of the sea were seen; the foundations of the world were laid bare, at the rebuke of

the LORD, at the blast of the breath of his nostrils.

¹⁷ “He sent from on high, he took me; he drew me out of many waters.

¹⁸ He rescued me from my strong enemy, from those who hated me, for they were too mighty for me.

¹⁹ They confronted me in the day of my calamity, but the LORD was my support.

²⁰ He brought me out into a broad place; he rescued me, because he delighted in me.

²¹ “The LORD dealt with me according to my righteousness; according to the cleanness of my hands he rewarded me.

²² For I have kept the ways of the LORD and have not wickedly departed from my God.

²³ For all his rules were before me, and from his statutes I did not turn aside.

²⁴ I was blameless before him, and I kept myself from guilt.

²⁵ And the LORD has rewarded me according to my righteousness, according to my cleanness in his sight.

²⁶ “With the merciful you show yourself merciful; with the blameless man you show yourself blameless; with the purified you deal purely, and with the crooked you make yourself seem tortuous.

²⁸ You save a humble people, but your eyes are on the haughty to bring them down.

²⁹ For you are my lamp, O LORD, and my God lightens my darkness.

³⁰ For by you I can run against a troop, and by my God I can leap over a wall.

³¹ This God—his way is perfect; the word of the LORD proves true; he is a shield for all those who take refuge in him.

³² “For who is God, but the LORD? And who is a rock, except our God?

³³ This God is my strong refuge and has made my way blameless.

³⁴ He made my feet like the feet of a deer and set me secure on the heights.

³⁵ He trains my hands for war, so that my arms can bend a bow of bronze.

³⁶ You have given me the shield of your salvation, and your gentleness made me great.

³⁷ You gave a wide place for my steps under me, and my feet did not slip;

³⁸ I pursued my enemies and destroyed them, and did not turn back until they were consumed.

³⁹ I consumed them; I thrust them through, so that they did not rise; they fell under my feet.

⁴⁰ For you equipped me with strength for the battle; you made those who rise against me sink under me.

⁴¹ You made my enemies turn their backs to me, those who hated me, and I destroyed them.

⁴² They looked, but there was none to save; they cried to the LORD, but he did not answer them.

⁴³ I beat them fine as the dust of the earth; I crushed them and stamped them down like the mire of the streets.

⁴⁴ “You delivered me from strife with my people; you kept me as the head of the nations; people whom I had not known served me.

⁴⁵ Foreigners came cringing to me; as soon as they heard of me, they obeyed me.

⁴⁶ Foreigners lost heart and came trembling out of their fortresses.

⁴⁷ “The LORD lives, and blessed be my rock, and exalted be my God, the rock of my salvation,

⁴⁸ the God who gave me vengeance and brought down peoples under me,

⁴⁹ who brought me out from my enemies; you exalted me above those who rose against me; you delivered me from men of violence.

⁵⁰ “For this I will praise you, O LORD, among the nations, and sing praises to your name.

⁵¹ Great salvation he brings to his king, and shows steadfast love to his anointed, to David and his offspring forever.”

Then, we hear David’s parting words, as he reflects upon his life and reign.

2 Samuel 23:1-7 (ESV)

¹ Now these are the last words of David: The oracle of David, the son of Jesse, the oracle of the man who was raised on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, the sweet psalmist of Israel:

² “The Spirit of the LORD speaks by me; his word is on my tongue.

³ The God of Israel has spoken; the Rock of Israel has said to me: When one rules justly over men, ruling in the fear of God,

⁴ he dawns on them like the morning light, like the sun shining forth on a cloudless morning, like rain that makes grass to sprout from the earth.

⁵ “For does not my house stand so with God? For he has made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and secure. For will he not cause to prosper all my help and my desire?

⁶ But worthless men are all like thorns that are thrown away, for they cannot be taken with the hand;

⁷ but the man who touches them arms himself with iron and the shaft of a spear, and they are utterly consumed with fire.”

This is a fitting end to the story of David, only it's not the end.

As 2 Samuel draws to a close, David makes a very bad decision—he takes a census of Israel. Why is this a bad decision? David's census is for the purpose of determining the number of able-bodied soldiers in Israel, which reflects a lack of trust in God as Israel's ultimate protector. Even Joab, the commander of David's army, warns David not to take a census. But David insists. In response, God sends a deadly plague against Israel, thereby weakening the very thing David is trusting in: the population.

To end the plague, David purchases a plot of land that has a threshing floor and offers a sacrifice. Because threshing floors symbolized bountiful crops, they were commonly converted into holy ground, so David's choice of this location is not entirely random. After the sacrifice is made, the plague ends. Beyond providing a lesson about trusting in God's protection and provision, this story explains how the future site of the Temple was purchased—a temple David's son and successor, Solomon, will soon build.

Questions for Review:

1. Where did the prophet Micah say that the Messiah would be born? **Bethlehem.**
2. Where was David from? **Bethlehem**
3. What are two characteristics that both David and the coming Messiah-Deliverer would have in common? **They would be rulers as well as shepherds.**
4. Why is the title Son of David a reference to the coming Messiah-Deliverer? **Because it means that the Messiah will come from David's family lineage as well as being a shepherd and a ruler.**
5. When David makes the famous statement in 2 Samuel 1:25, “Oh how the mighty have fallen.” Who is he referring to? **King Saul and his son Jonathan.**
6. Once David becomes King, where does he move the capital? **From Hebron to Jerusalem.**
7. David runs into a problem while transporting the Ark of the Covenant and the Tabernacle from Kiriath-Jearim to Jerusalem. What happens? **The ark is being transported on a cart and begins to totter. Uzzah reaches out and takes hold of the ark to steady it and is immediately struck dead.**
8. Why did God allow this to happen? **Because David was not transporting the Ark of the Covenant in the proscribed manner.**
9. How was the Ark of the Covenant to be transported? **With the use of two poles and carried by four men.**

10. When David wants to build a house for God, what does God say? God tells him “No thanks” because his hands are so bloody from all the wars he has fought; However, God tells David that He will have a house that will last forever, a dynasty that will endure forever.
11. What is this promise that God makes to David called? The Davidic covenant.
12. “It was spring, when kings go out to war’ (2 Samuel 11:1), where was King David? On his palace roof watching Bathsheba taking a purification bath.
13. Once David discovers that Bathsheba is pregnant, what does he do about her husband Uriah? He immediately summons Uriah to come home from battle so he can be with his wife.
14. Does Uriah go home to his wife? No, he sleeps at the door of the palace.
15. What final step does David take to get rid of Uriah? He instructs his commander, Joab, to place Uriah on the front lines of battle and then have all the troops of Israel withdraw, exposing Uriah to the enemy.
16. How does God confront David regarding his affair with Bathsheba? David receives a visit from the prophet Nathan who tells David a parable about a rich man with many herds who stole a poor man’s only lamb. At the end of the story, he looks David straight in the eye and says, “You’re the man!”
17. Which one of David’s sons tried to steal the throne from his father? Absalom
18. What was Absalom’s distinguishing feature? His hair, which ended up causing his death.

Next Lesson 32: *The Golden Age of Solomon*